

# 10 THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW TO PREPARE FOR HURRICANE SEASON

1. During the off season is the time to stock up on supplies -- batteries, water and non-perishable food. If you wait until a hurricane is approaching, your chances of finding the items you need are not ideal.
2. Buy a small plastic carrying case for your important papers. Keep it filled and updated during hurricane season so all you have to do is grab and go if you have to evacuate.
3. Save that ice. At the beginning of hurricane season start using that ice that builds up in your icemaker. Fill up several plastic bags with ice and store them in your freezer.
4. Have at least two coolers. One for drinks and one for food. You might also want to have a third cooler on hand for the stuff you will use most often. That way you aren't opening all the coolers frequently and letting the ice melt.
5. It gets really dark when there's no electricity. Battery and solar operated light products are much better than candles. Make sure you have at least one per person.
6. Your cordless phone won't work without electricity. Make sure you can communicate with loved ones. Have a phone with a regular cord. They're very inexpensive and can be your communication lifeline in an emergency.
7. Pets are family too. Make sure you have a pet carrier or transportation device for each pet in your home along with a plan for your pets should a disaster occur.
8. Cash is a must. ATM machines don't work when the electricity is out and the likelihood of your corner store offering to cash a check is slim. Sock away some bucks in that plastic carrying case (see tip #2) so you'll never be caught short-handed.
9. When preparing your home, don't forget to look up. Check those trees and tree limbs. Trim those that could damage your house.
10. Your garage door is a vulnerable wind entry point during a hurricane. Make sure you have it reinforced to prevent collapse.